

**SECRET**  
**UNITED STATES READINESS COMMAND**  
**OFFICE OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF**  
**MACDILL AIR FORCE BASE, FLORIDA 33608**

  
 RCCC

27 MAR 1985

General John W. Vessey, Jr.  
 Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff  
 Washington, D.C. 20301-5000

Dear General Vessey:

(C) As you are aware, Secretary Weinberger has placed considerable emphasis on defense of the United States. In his 9 August 1984 memorandum, subject: Land Defense Planning, he stated that "the priority objective for all land defense plans is to ensure the continued ability of the nation to mobilize, deploy, and sustain its military forces during any national emergency, by defeating. . . any threat to disrupt these functions by sabotage or direct ground attack on key facilities." In that same memorandum, he tasked the Director of the Defense Intelligence Agency "to assist land defense planning by developing procedures for continuous analysis of the threat."

(S) The USREDCOM staff has been working closely with Jim Williams' people to develop viable threat estimates so that this command can proceed with its planning. This effort requires a comprehensive grasp of what the potential threats might encompass. We see the threat to land defense to be of a larger scope and complexity than is normally within the purview of DIA. With regard to that threat, USREDCOM requires information/intelligence on a wide spectrum of activities which might interfere with or otherwise influence our missions. Such information includes, but is not limited to: the possibility of civil disturbances or civil disobedience, which might impact on the mobilization and/or movement of military forces; GRU SPETSNAZ or other unconventional threats to key facilities or key means of mobilization; terrorist organizations which might receive support from hostile nations or from sympathizers in friendly nations; threats of sabotage, espionage, or subversion directed against U.S. forces or facilities in the CONUS; capability/intentions of terrorists, merchant ships, or other means to mine or otherwise block our ports or key waterways; and any conventional threat from landed forces.

(C) The complexity of providing information on these diverse threats probably transcends DIA's capability and is, in large part, outside the charter of that agency. Accordingly, we perceive that this effort will require the attention of the entire intelligence community. It might, of necessity, call for an examination of the threat as it may apply to widely differing scenarios, encompassing periods of national emergency, mobilization, limited war, general war, or a

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nuclear exchange. We see a requirement for a national estimate (NIE or SNIE) which would address the many aspects of the threat to CONUS, and which would support our military emergency response planning. We believe that such an estimate could serve as an effective "baseline" document, not only for USREDCOM and the entire Defense Department, but also for the non-DoD activities whose support in providing information is critical during periods of crisis, e.g., the FBI and FEMA.

(U) In view of the high priority placed on this subject by the SECDEF, we request your support in sponsoring, through the Director, DIA, a national estimate on the threat to CONUS.

Sincerely,



WALLACE H. NUTTING  
General, USA  
Commander in Chief

CF:  
✓ Dir, DIA